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REPORT

ON THE

# CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

OF

MINNESOTA, OHIO, MICHIGAN, AND INDIANA

BY

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

This pamphlet embodies the observations of a group of educational experts, who, in the early part of 1921, visited several of the consolidated schools in certain States of the American Union. It is hoped that the accounts of the writers as set forth herein will be useful to those interested in the education of the young in rural communities, as throwing light upon the solution of school problems very similar to ours by communities outside our own Province.

Department of Education,
October, 1922.

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## REPORT OF MR. J. A. TAYLOR, B.A., INSPECTOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS, WEST ELGIN, ON CERTAIN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS IN MINNESOTA

I visited the following consolidated schools in Minnesota between January 15th and January 22nd, 1921: Bloomington, Chicago City, Forest Lake, Langdon, Mound and Rosemount.

Bloomington has four public school rooms, two high school rooms, an auditorium and rooms for agriculture, domestic science and manual Training.

Langdon has two public school rooms, one high school room, an auditorium and rooms for manual training and domestic science.

Chicago City has four public school rooms, two high school rooms, an auditorium and rooms for manual training and domestic science.

Rosemount has four public school rooms, two high school rooms, an auditorium and rooms for manual training and domestic science.

Forest Lake has eight public school rooms, six high school rooms, an auditorium, an assembly room and rooms for manual training and domestic science.

Mound has ten public school rooms, four high school rooms, an assembly room, an auditorium and rooms for manual training and domestic science.

I wanted to see every type of school, from the three-room consolidated giving only one year high school work to the large consolidated school giving four years of high school work. Previous to visiting these schools I corresponded with the Education Department at St. Paul. Mr. Geo. A. Selke, Inspector of Consolidated Schools, was good enough to accompany me two days. He placed at my disposal every facility and gave me every information I desired regarding these schools. I was particularly interested in the three and four-room consolidated schools, as these will likely be the types of schools built in Ontario until consolidation becomes well established. These schools are a revelation, an inspiration, and a promise, and present the only feasible solution for the rural school problem. The first impression is one of astonishment that a people who speak the same language as we, have a common origin, inherit the same traditions, wrestle with the same problem of rural depopulation, have in such a large measure effected a solution for that problem by substituting the consolidated school for the inefficient, expensive, and pioneer one-teacher school.

### Transportation.

The difficulties accompanying transportation I find have been greatly exaggerated. Undoubtedly before the good roads movement started there were difficulties, but when consolidation was established these difficulties rapidly disappeared. Good roads, in almost every instance, followed consolidation rather than preceded it. I conversed with parents, pupils, van drivers, and principals, and all assured me that transportation difficulties were now reduced to a minimum. I rode in the vans, watched them unload their human freight in the morning, and reload with the same human freight at night. The vans are comfortable, dry, and warmed by carbon foot warmers. The van driver is a man of judgment, character, and average intelligence. He neither uses, nor permits to be used, language that would give offence to the most refined. He reports daily on the children's conduct. He is under a bond of $300, to safeguard the children's

health and comfort and to protect the vans. Most of the schools own the vans. The original horse-driven, cumbersome, slow, pioneer van has now been displaced in most cases by the auto bus which carries from 30 to 40 children. This bus when loaded rides like a Pullman car and travels about twenty miles an hour. Truancy is unknown. There is no necessity for truant officers where transportation is in operation. One wet morning I passed five boys going to a one-teacher rural school. It was raining heavily. Their clothes were wet. They had no place in the school to change their attire, even if they had extra available clothing. Arriving at the consolidated school, I saw the pupils jump from the vans as dry as though no rain were falling. When to this personal comfort is added the absence of vulgarity, profanity, and improper conduct, it is readily seen how great is the gap between the consolidated schools and our one-teacher schools. It is difficult to exaggerate the conveniences and efficiency of Consolidated Schools. They are a revelation. Could parents and trustees see the laughing, happy, healthy, well-clad children leaving the vans, there would be no opposition to consolidation.

### Cost of Transportation.

The cost of transportation varies in different places. The scarcity of labor, state of the roads, density of population, character of the country, whether hilly or level, length of route, climatic conditions, occupations of the people, are all factors which enter into the cost of transporting the children. The length of the routes varies from two or three miles to eight or nine. Where the area of a consolidated district is less than twelve square miles, there is no necessity for public transportation. Children living within a distance of one mile walk to the school, and these are the pupils who are irregular in attendance. No hard and fast lines can be drawn as to the area of a consolidation as it primarily depends on the density of population, condition of the roads, character of the country, value of the land, kind of school, and whether transportation is to be by motor or horse. If the latter is used then the area must be smaller and should not exceed twenty-five square miles. Auto transportation makes possible a very large area. Experience has amply demonstrated that small areas with low taxable valuation and with less than 100 children do not give the best consolidations. Contiguous consolidated schools frequently preclude subsequent enlargement of small areas. A better and more efficient service is rendered where the district owns the conveyances. While it is true that, where the driver furnishes the van, the bill for repairs and sundries is less, and the Board is relieved from many details such as purchasing oil, gasoline, tires, etc., yet it is found by experience that public ownership gives a better and cheaper service inasmuch as the vans are kept in better condition, are more comfortable and efficient, and reliable drivers are more easily found. Improved roads, too, accompany school-owned vans. Inefficient and incompetent drivers who own their vans are too independent, and make dismissal difficult, since successors who own vans are not quickly and readily available. A reliable estimate of the approximate cost of transportation must include depreciation, repairs, interest on investment, insurance, and drivers' wages.

Motor transportation has many advantages over horse-drawn vans. Drivers are more easily secured and at smaller salaries. The routes are longer, the time is shorter, and fewer vans are required. The pupils are more comfortable in motor vans, get home earlier in the evening, and do not have to start so early in

the morning. Retired farmers, bankers, high school boys, janitors, and teachers make efficient drivers. Moreover they are free at the time the children are to be transported. Where the driver furnishes the horses, and the Section provides the van, the driver would get from $3.00 to $4.00 a day for a four to six mile route. If the section provides the autos, drivers can be procured without difficulty for from $2.00 to $3.00 for a six to ten mile route. Generally speaking, where the section owns the auto or van, a driver would charge from 50c to 80c. a mile (one way). These of course are the prices which obtained during the war. Drivers' wages are much less now. In a few cases the auto van drives to the children's homes, but in most cases the children walk to the road. In no case does a child walk farther than three-quarters of a mile to meet the van. The van, like a train, travels on schedule time; and, barring accident, it is very seldom late.

### Industrial Education.

This is the land of opportunity, and the children's century. We are living in a very complex age of civilization. Demands are made for an education which it is impossible for the one-teacher rural school to give. This century must offer a broader and a more extended and enriched curriculum. If rural adolescents are to be retained in school they must of necessity receive instruction in manual training, cooking, sewing, agriculture and music. These are subjects that are vitally related to the immediate life and activities of country children. The one-teacher school will never be able to give adequate instruction in these subjects because (1) the teacher requires special training, and (2) the teacher is already burdened with too many grades and subjects. Clearly then the essentials of a modern curriculum require specially trained teachers, and a several-teacher school. The consolidated school is admirably adapted to furnish this instruction. It was a revelation to me to see the work done in manual training, sewing, cooking and agriculture. The equipment is modern, ample and complete. The subjects are the most popular on the curriculum. At Mound Consolidated School, the inspiring sight was presented of about 200 pupils, seated in a most orderly manner around tables, partaking of a noon lunch prepared in part by the pupils in household science. At Forest Lake Consolidated School, projects were completed in manual training, the equal of which is would be difficult to find. At the Bloomington school we listened to a lesson in advanced agriculture given to a class of adolescents by a specially trained teacher.

### Site and Unit of Area.

The site selected for the consolidated school is generally in some small village. Preference is given to this location, if central, because of its post office and general dry goods store, blacksmith shop, gasoline, and railway station. The larger unit is favoured because it makes possible better buildings, a more comprehensive course of study, higher salaries for teachers, lower mill rate for maintenance, greater number of older pupils, a better high school department, and a larger and more varied equipment. Good roads are becoming the rule, not the exception. Electric energy is being sent into every district. The maximum unit of area of a couple of years ago will now be the minimum. The larger the district, the more popular the school, and the greater the desire for attendance. A small consolidated school combines the disadvantages of a one-teacher school with the advantages of a consolidated one. The school site consists of from five

to ten acres. It is ample for all school games, for a school garden and a working laboratory for experiments in agriculture. Some consolidated schools are experimenting with fruits, grains, and vegetables. As the agricultural instructor must be a graduate of an agricultural college, he will be able to give not only suitable training to the pupils but also expert advice and information in agricultural matters to the farmers. In short, the consolidated school has the wonderful possibilities of becoming an agricultural college to the community it serves. Short courses in agriculture are given to all young farmers wanting it. Many lectures by eminent men in their departments are given during the winter months.

### Physical Exercises and Cadet Corps.

The consolidated school offers supervised and organized play both on the playground, and in the gymnasium on wet and disagreeable days. There is little opportunity for organized play in our rural schools, because (1) the pupils are too few and (2) it is difficult to interest those of different ages in the same games. The transporting of large numbers of boys ranging from twelve to sixteen years of age makes possible the establishing of cadet corps in connection with consolidated schools. To these cadet corps, rural schools have been, and must continue to be, strangers. There is nothing in school life that produces such a fine esprit de corps, a rational patriotism, a high sense of personal honour, and a deep respect for law and order as do these corps. The manner in which cadets acquitted themselves in the late war, their ready response to the country's call, the high positions of trust and responsibility which they occupied not only in civil but in military life, are everlasting tributes to the value of cadet training in public schools.

### Community Activities.

One of the great disabilities under which rural communities labour in Ontario is the absence of any building suitable for concerts or public gatherings. The difficulty of disseminating new ideas or initiating new movements is thus intensified. The auditorium of a consolidated school supplies this want. During the day, the classes use it for organized plays and physical exercises. At noons and after school dismissals, scheduled games are played. In the evenings, basket ball, competition school concerts, athletic contests, moving pictures, lyceum courses, and public meetings are held. Adolescents use it for dramatic and literary entertainments. The consolidated school thus becomes the social centre for social recreation and amusement, and gives to the community all the advantages of urban life without any of its vices.

### Buildings.

All the consolidated schools I visited were of a substantial character. The Department through its Superintendent fixes the standard, and to this all schools must conform if state aid is to be given. Liberal grants are given towards the cost of structure, maintenance, and transportation. Each school must have an auditorium and rooms for manual training and household science in addition to its public and high school classrooms. In some of the schools visited, I found both an auditorium and an assembly room. All the rooms were equipped with electric lights to reinforce the natural light on dark days. Classroom lighting is from the left. Ventilation is effected by means of fans driven by electricity. Absolutely pure water is pumped from deep wells, and forced into fountains

located in the halls. The toilets have hot and cold water, and have the most modern equipment installed. They are kept scrupulously clean. The Forest Lake school has shower baths for both boys and girls. A room is provided for children who have become sick while in school. There are telephones, typewriters, and rotary mimeographs. In short, every convenience and equipment possible is provided. What a contrast to our rural schools in Ontario!

### Cost of Schools and Equipment.

Only in a general way can the cost of schools in Minnesota and Ontario be compared. The schools I visited were substantial structures complete in every detail with no waste in either space or construction. They were all or nearly all built in war days; consequently the expense would be much greater than now. Each had in addition to the ordinary classrooms an assembly room, a fan system of ventilation, rooms for manual training and household science, a humidifier, steam heat, flush indoor closets, and indoor drinking fountains. The equipment was complete and modern, and consisted of, in addition to the essentials, a piano, typewriting machine, rotary mimeograph, phonograph, etc. A comparison of the 252 consolidated schools shows the cost of a two-teacher school to be around $15,000, or $5,000 a room (including assembly room); a four-teacher from $20,000 to $28,000, or about $5,500 a room; a five-teacher, from $35,000 to $45,000, or about $5,000 a room. To generalize one might say that the cost would range around $5,000 a room.

### Educational Waste in Rural Schools.

In no other public utility is there such great financial waste as there is in our inefficient, wasteful, and expensive rural schools. This waste is caused by:

(*a*) Irregular attendance whether through sickness, truancy, parental indifference, or physical disability. As the expense of maintaining the staff and heating the schools has to be met whether the attendance is large or small, it can readily be seen what waste of money there is from this alone.

(*b*) Poor ventilation. The biggest foe of good discipline is impure air, while the greatest enemy of good progress is poor discipline. Consequently, good progress is impossible where there is not a continuous supply of fresh, warm air. It is little less than criminal to compel children to sit all day in a vitiated atmosphere, while to admit air by the window in winter is to imperil their health.

(*c*) Unsuitable seats. These produce restlessness, indifference, inattention, and lack of concentration. When to this is added physical discomfort, it is easily seen that the progress made is not proportional to the expense incurred.

(*d*) Small attendance. Where the attendance is too small to give inspiration to the teacher or afford competition to the pupils.

(*e*) Teachers inadequately paid. Good teachers cannot be attracted to or retained in a section that pays small salaries.

(*f*) Frequent change of teachers. A large part of the school year is over before the new teacher knows the local conditions, academic standing of the pupils, inspires confidence in the section, and meets and knows the parents.

In consolidated schools I found no such financial waste. They were manned by the best teachers obtainable. The salaries paid are such as will attract and retain experienced and highly qualified teachers. The schools are well organized and the pupils properly classified. Each teacher has only two grades to teach. There is no such thing as irregular attendance among transported

pupils. I examined many of the school registers and was simply astonished to find the attendance averaging ninety-two per cent. of the enrolment. To an Ontario school inspector having to do with rural schools, this seems incredible. In fact, it is very doubtful if any urban attendance in Ontario was ever found as high as ninety-two per cent. The eight per cent. absent were those who lived in the school district but were not transported. Is it possible to submit any more convincing evidence of the value of transportation? Moreover, pupils enjoy the companionship of those much the same in size and age. The Bloomington school increased its attendance in one year from 120 to 193. At the Forest school I found an Entrance class of thirty-seven pupils gathered from the district, and nearly all of them but for transportation would not be in school. This school has been in operation two years. The first year one van was sufficient, the second year required four, and this year ten are necessary. The attendance is now 450; of these 100 are in the High School. It certainly was a memorable sight to witness 250 pupils leave school in perfect order and alignment, and march to the waiting vans. Not more than five minutes elapsed from the dismissal of school until each van was speeding homeward. The pupils are home every evening before five o'clock.

### Health of Pupils.

The children were found in a remarkably healthy condition. Although I had visited over fifty classrooms and observed over 1,000 children, I did not notice one pupil with a cold or cough. This is vastly different from the condition in which we find pupils in our one-room rural school with window ventilation. The health of pupils is either a national asset or a liability. The one-room school is inimical to proper physical development. The absence of a warm lunch, wet clothing, unequal classroom temperature, exposure to open windows, eating of cold lunches at noon hours, inaccessible drinking water, bad habits formed through disinclination to visit filthy and repulsive outdoor closets, a vitiated and germ-laden classroom atmosphere, the absence of play, cross lights from faulty lighting, slowly but surely undermine good health and vitality. On the other hand a consolidated school is conducive to the development of a strong, healthy physique. The warm noonday lunch, physical exercises, organized plays, fan system of ventilation, well lighted and uniformly heated classrooms, indoor drinking fountains, sanitary flush toilets, the absence of damp clothing and wet feet, and above all the transportation in warm, dry, comfortable vans—these conditions conserve health, promote bodily resistance, and develop physical endurance.

### Nature of Roads.

Only a general description can be given of the Minnesota roads. They are like our own—some good, some bad. Like Ontario, Minnesota is spending colossal sums in their improvement. Generally speaking, the state roads are as good as our own, while the side roads are, if anything, worse. The consolidated school blazes the way for good roads. Farmers' automobiles and consolidated schools have preached the gospel of good roads infinitely more forcibly than the tourist's cry or the commercial dollar. Public ownership of auto or horse vans develops a community spirit and this spirit coupled with a desire to get the children to school makes for road improvement. Impassable roads, whether from snow or drift or mud, are generally looked after by farmers whose property parallels these roads. After a drift or heavy snow fall the roads are

dragged, and made passable for the vans. Consolidation, more than any other agency, begets a community spirit which regards good roads as an educational necessity. Poor sections of roads are systematically dragged, gravelled, or graded. Better drainage and resurfacing, where necessary, work wonders in road improvement. During the wet period in Spring, when the winter snow is melting, making all roads more or less impassable, the sensible method of closing the school for about ten days or two weeks is followed. The summer holidays are then two weeks less. Of course, it must be remembered that when roads are impassable for school vans they are also impassable for commercial traffic. Days that are unfit for van traffic are also unfit for human traffic. The climate of Minnesota is much colder and the snow fall greater than in Central or Southern Ontario, yet in 1917, when transportation was not as perfected as it is now, and when the good roads movement was only in its infancy, the 588 vans conveying 9,675 children to 185 consolidated schools missed on an average but one day, and were on an average late but once. Sixty-three were not late even once and seventy-nine did not even miss one trip. Could any more eloquent or convincing evidence be given of the practicability of transportation or its successful operation? Minnesota has now 252 Consolidated Schools. Never once has a consolidated district reverted to a one-teacher school. Comment is unnecessary.

### Advantages of Consolidated Schools.

From observations in and out of the classrooms and from conversations with parents and teachers, I find that the consolidated school gives the following undoubted advantages over our one-teacher schools:

1. Better buildings, superior accommodations, and more extensive and varied equipment.

2. Prevents boys deserting the farm, by the companionship of and association with adolescents of equal age at school.

3. A very large increase in attendance. Pupils far more regular and punctual.

4. Conserves health by absence of wet clothing.

5. Better classification and grading of pupils, and organizing of schools.

6. More experienced teaching staff; higher salaries tending to permanency of position.

7. As the unit area is enlarged, the cost of maintenance is distributed more equitably.

8. Teachers derive inspiration from numbers, and pupils derive enthusiasm from competition.

9. Teaching much more efficient, and progress more marked because better accommodations, classification, and equipment.

10. Provides amusements, entertainments, moving pictures, and makes the school the centre of the social life.

11. Brings High School education to the door of every ratepayer, and at a very small cost.

12. Increases the value of the land, and, by reason of transportation, the land most distant in a district becomes as valuable as that nearest the school.

13. Provides an enriched and more extended curriculum, and offers industrial or a measure of vocational education in manual training agriculture, household science, and music.

14. Equalizes educational opportunity.
15. Protects the morals of pupils going to and coming from school.

## Our Problems.

The great problems of teacher shortage, rural depopulation, and the rural school are pressing for solution. Consolidation offers the only permanent solution. Rural exodus ceases where consolidation is in operation. The pronounced increase in attendance in consolidated areas indicates an urban exodus to rural parts. Centralization alone can give equal educational opportunity. Precedent to its general establishment must come an enlargement of the administrative unit. If Ontario is to retain educational leadership on this continent, rural school consolidation is essential. Given centralization, with the present high academic standing and professional attainments of the Normal School graduates, our whole educational status would be changed. It will come as surely as night follows day. Once a few are established throughout the Province, their general adoption will be rapid, as a consolidated school in operation brings conviction and conversion. The log cabin has given way to the brick mansion, the Jew's harp to the phonograph, the team to the tractor, the wagon to the automobile, the corduroy road to the paved street, the walking plough to the riding cultivator, the scrub stock to the thoroughbred, the churn to the cream separator; but the little red, lonely, isolated, inefficient, expensive school house on the hill continues, as in the days of our great-grandfathers, and remains the same yesterday, to-day, but, let us hope, not forever.

Respectfully submitted,
J. A. Taylor.

# REPORT OF MR. J. W. MARSHALL, B.A., INSPECTOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS, WELLAND, ON CERTAIN CENTRALIZED AND CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS IN OHIO

In Ohio, a *centralized* school is one which affords the full course from primer to fourth year high school at one centre for the whole school district, which generally covers an area equivalent to a whole township. *Consolidated* schools serve smaller areas, and in many cases do not maintain classes in high school work.

The first and most important step towards centralization of schools in Ohio was the new law of 1914 which not only provided for county boards of education in all counties but also invested these boards with authority to re-district their counties so that the school centre might coincide with the social and business centres, regardless of township lines. The result is that, though there are about as many school districts in each county as there are townships and villages, the township line is entirely divested of its hitherto abnormal importance. County lines, too, often have to yield to the best interests of the schools.

## A Typical Centralized School.

A typical school of this class is arranged as follows:—In the basement are found a large room for manual training, a kitchen for domestic science, a large playroom, both boys' and girls' toilets, storage closets, fuel, heater, and engine rooms. On the first floor are three grade rooms, a rest room, general office, sewing room for domestic science, and an auditorium seating from 400 to 700 people. On the second floor are the other grade rooms and the high school classrooms. Another feature very commonly found is a study room to accommodate from 100 to 150 pupils, where those not at recitation may all study quietly under the supervision of one teacher, and without the disturbance occasioned by a class at recitation.

Mount Zion School, in Bucyrus Township, Crawford County, is a strictly rural centralized school, which provides the eight grades of public school and the four grades of high school work, and serves parts of four townships. The only building within half a mile of this school is a church, which was very lifeless under the old conditions, and, as part of a circuit, contributed only a trifling amount towards the minister's salary; but, within two years after the centralized school was erected in the open country, this church called a minister of its own, and now pays his whole salary except what he receives as instructor in music at the school. It was my privilege to ride to this school in one of the vans with the children, over a road that was not better than one of our average roads, only part of it being macadamized. This van was a Ford truck, owned by the school board, with a body built to carry forty children, and the driver was a high school boy who receives $30 per month. Superintendent Bittikofer of Crawford County maintains that, if they provide only the same public school work that the pupils are taught in ungraded schools, the centralized schools would reduce the cost.

## General Success of Centralization.

Though the eighty-eight counties of Ohio have a total of over 800 centralized and consolidated schools, and also have provision in their law for voting upon

the question of return to the old system after three years' trial, there is not yet a case of decentralization on record. Many counties have practically all their rural schools centralized, and Union County has 100 wagon routes. In Miami County, the centralized schools graduate sixty-five per cent. more pupils per attendance than do the one-room schools. Increased interest in school affairs, better teaching, better buildings and equipment, organized play, and a socialization of the school and community are some of the evident results.

### The Williamsport Centralized School.

One of the most interesting centralized schools I had the pleasure of visiting was that at Williamsport, Pickaway County. The building contains seventeen rooms, including thirteen classrooms, a laboratory, an office, a rest room, a library, and an auditorium with seating capacity of 400 and a spacious stage. Drinking fountains are provided in the basement and on both floors, pure water being supplied from a drilled well about 100 feet deep. This school serves Deercreek Township and parts of three other townships, and has an average daily attendance of 300 pupils, for whose transportation the board owns and operates eight waggons. The longest route covered by any of the eight vans is seven miles. The driver of this van receives $85 per month for the nine school months for the services of himself and his team. The other drivers average $60 per month for the shorter routes. The board is seriously considering the selling of all horse-drawn vans and investing in motor trucks. Assistant teachers' salaries are $100 to $110 per month for the nine months per year.

### Smith-Hughes Department of Agriculture.

By an Act sponsored by Messrs. Smith and Hughes and passed in 1917, provision was made for the teaching of vocational agriculture in first grade rural high schools, the local board providing the accommodations and equipment, and the state and the nation sharing equally the payment of the salary of the instructor. The Act became effective in 1918. The first year's work is based on farm crops and horticulture; the second year, animal husbandry and poultry; the third year, soils and dairying; the fourth year, farm engineering and farm management. Each class has ninety minutes per day in this subject, and it is optional with Latin in the rural high schools of Ohio. As a rule, first and second year classes work together, and third and fourth year classes together. Some typical projects made use of are: Construction of Hog Feeders, Farm Accounting, Repairing Farm Machinery, Orcharding, Spraying.

### Some Consolidated Schools.

(*a*) *Linworth.*

The first consolidated school visited was that at Linworth in the Township of Perry in Franklin County, twelve miles from Columbus. This school serves half of the long, narrow township and takes the place of six district (section) schools up to grade VIII only. Pupils of the high school grades are carried three miles farther to a high school at the village of Worthington. Four vans carry all the pupils, and one of the four vans then takes all the high school pupils on to Worthington. The board owns all the vans, and pays each driver $60 per month for nine school months; nothing extra is paid for driving on to the high school. These vans are all Ford trucks with tops, and they carry thirty-five to forty-five pupils.

It is worthy of note that, during the two years of the existence of this school, no van has yet missed a trip, and none has ever been more than fifteen minutes late. No special provision is made for keeping winter roads in condition, but good roads naturally follow van routes. No difficulty arises from waiting at corners. The law provides for a shelter house at such places, but it is not carried out in practice. They have no more holidays in winter than we have. Trucks are much to be preferred to horse-drawn vans, and many boards of education are displacing the vans with motor trucks. The cost of transportation varies from $30 per month paid to a responsible high school boy to drive a motor truck owned by the board to $210 per month to a man who owned and operated his own truck.

(*b*) *Alton.*

In the Township of Prairie just west of the City of Columbus, the dozen or more district one-room schools have recently given place to three consolidated schools, none of which provide any high school work. The board received tenders at the same time for the erection of the three buildings. All are very ordinary four-room buildings, with practically no halls and very small basements; in fact, the boys' basement is used only as a manual training room. A special teacher for each of the subjects of art, music, domestic science, and manual training in these three schools comes from Columbus; and in one of these, the Alton school, the lady principal teaches all pupils of grades six, seven and eight, and also takes the subject of agriculture.

I had the pleasure of making the homeward trip with the children on one of the vans from Alton school. The driver receives $100 per month for nine months of the year for the services of himself and his team. A man who owns eight hundred acres of land along this route but who has no children told me that he had voted for consolidation thinking it would be better for the children of his tenants, but had since concluded that they might better have had the one centralized school with the high school work included than the three smaller consolidated schools in the township without work above the eighth grade.

### Taxes and Grants.

The state tax rate for schools in Ohio is one and one-tenths mills and the county rate is generally about one mill. This is levied on a property valuation basis, but distributed on a school population census. Neither the state nor the county gives a grant toward cost of building or cost of vans but the state pays twenty-five per cent. on salaries and the county twelve and a half per cent. Also the state pays thirty-seven and a half per cent. on the personal service cost of transportation on the following basis, viz.: Where the district owns the vehicle and the means of locomotion, the entire compensation of the driver shall constitute such expense; where the district owns the vehicle but not the means of locomotion, then one half of the amount paid shall constitute the cost of personal service; but where the district owns nothing, then one third of the cost shall be considered as for personal service.

School districts that take the required school census in May and report it properly, receive a grant at the rate of two dallars per head of population between the ages of six and twenty-one.

### Centralization of Champaign County.

Consolidation in Champaign County had its inception in Mad River Township in 1897, when the board of education began transporting eighteen pupils

to the two-room school at Westville. At that time comment was unfavourable, but transportation rapidly grew in favour until, within three years, all schools in the northern part of the township were abandoned, and the pupils transported to Westville. A larger building was erected, accommodating both the grade and the high school pupils. Complete centralization was effected in Mad River Township in 1915, but in the adjoining Township of Concord in 1914. Other townships in the county began to observe the success of this plan and to adopt it, and now there are but seven one-room schools left in a county which had 121 such schools in 1896. There were eight two-room schools in the county in 1914, and to-day three. The centralized school is as far ahead of these two-room schools as these are ahead of the one room. The county board of education has been of tremendous influence in the work of making centralization possible. Little attention has been paid to township or county lines.

Fifty-eight waggons are owned by boards of education, the drivers providing horses. The average annual salary paid such driver was $643 for a term of eight and one-half to nine months. Twenty waggons are used which are not owned by the boards. The salaries of these drivers per year average $628, practically all of these being in one district. There are nine trucks owned by boards; average annual salary of drivers, $500. Twenty-eight trucks are not owned by boards; average salary of drivers of these, $1,041. The number of pupils transported in waggons or other horse-drawn conveyances was 1,294; the number of pupils transported in trucks was 822. The average cost of transportation per pupil per day in 1919 was 17 cents.

### Attendance at High School.

In the centralized districts of Champaign County, in September, 1920, ninety-eight per cent. of the eighth grade graduates entered high school, while in the only non-centralized township only one-third are attending high school. Rural pupils will attend high school if it is at the same place they are in the habit of attending, but not if they are compelled to form new acquaintances.

Urbana City, with a population of about 10,000, is located in the northern part of Urbana Township. At the time centralization of Urbana Township was being discussed, there was considerable argument as to the advisability of establishing a high school in the centralized school. Many thought the pupils should attend the city high school. The year preceding centralization in Urbana Township there were nine pupils from the township attending the four grades of the city high schools. All eighth grade graduates were entitled to attend that school with their tuition paid by the township board. The following statement shows the advantage of having the high school in connection with the grade school, and high school pupils transported. Number at city high school before centralization, nine; number at high school first year after centralization, twenty; number at high school second year after centralization, thirty-eight; number third year after centralization, forty-seven; number fourth year after centralization, fifty-two; percentage gain in four years, 478%. The same four years show twenty per cent. increase in the seventh grade, and fourteen per cent. in the eighth grade.

### The Urbana Township Centralized School.

The children are carried by five waggons and five trucks, all of which are owned by the board except two of the trucks. The cost of services of man and

team ranges from $75 to $100 per month. The two trucks with drivers cost $125 per month. The school serves an area of thirty-seven and a half square miles, which includes Pretty Prairie and the Mad River valley, with soil equal to the best in the State.

No child walks to this school. It costs the board twenty cents per pupil per day, but four dollars per pupil per year less when the board owns the truck. This includes depreciation, counting the truck a wreck at 50,000 miles, together with interest at six per cent. on investment, all repairs charged as repairs but not as replacements, and one new set of cord tires per year.

The school site comprises five acres purchased in 1916 at $150 per acre. The building cost $40,000 to be paid in ten years. It contains ten classrooms, basement with four play-rooms, rest-room, and auditorium, which is also used as gymnasium.

Agriculture is taught in grades five, six, seven, and eight, and in the high school. The equipment includes soil testers, milk testers, soil thermometers, soil augers, mounts for insects, microscope, stains for slides, and a complete line of chemicals. Girls take sewing, but not cooking as yet; two sewing machines are provided. No manual training has yet been taken, but provision for it is contemplated. A fan system of ventilation changes air eight times per hour. A steam heating system has been installed. Water is supplied from bubblers with air pressure. The well is seventy-nine feet deep and an electric motor is used.

### Advantages of Centralization in Ohio.

(1) It unites and centres the interests of a larger section of people.
(2) It adds tone and dignity to education and to the farm community.
(3) Children on the farm have equal opportunities with those in town.
(4) Saves cost of sending children away to school, or of moving to town.
(5) Secures and holds trained teachers for country schools.
(6) Rich and poor have equal advantages in securing high school education.
(7) Provides graded classes whereby teachers may have sufficient time to do work and teach the grades or special subjects for which they are best fitted.
(8) It eliminates tardiness and truancy, and gives better returns for the money spent.
(9) It enhances the value of real estate.
(10) It keeps older boys and girls longer in school.
(11) It makes the farm the ideal place to bring up children.
(12) A principal can prevent errors from inexperience in assistants.
(13) Morals of pupils are more carefully protected.
(14) Health of pupils is preserved by transportation.
(15) Healthy rivalry is awakened through inspiration of numbers.
(16) Petty jealousies cause less interference.

### Notable Features of the Ohio Rural School System.

(1) Township boards, or the equivalent have, since 1904, entirely displaced the district or section boards of three trustees.
(2) County boards of five members are appointed in every county by the presidents or chairmen of all township and village boards with power to re-adjust the boundaries of school districts.

(3) Provision is made for the almost automatic dissolution of the one-room school with an average attendance of less than ten pupils.
(4) Transportation is compulsory for all pupils who live more than two miles from the school if below high school standing.
(5) Manhood and womanhood franchise on all school questions.
(6) Compulsory teaching of agriculture in all rural schools.
(7) The centralized school with its four years of high school work.
(8) The proper disregard for township and county boundaries when they interfere with the interests of education.

Respectfully submitted,
J. W. Marshall.

## REPORT OF MR. P. J. McLAREN, B.A., AND MR. J. R. BELL, B.A., ON CERTAIN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS IN THE STATES OF MICHIGAN AND INDIANA

The main purpose of the visit to some of the consolidated schools of the United States was to find out by personal observation and enquiry the practical working out of these schools, so as to be of some help in the establishment of similar schools in our own Province. Two things were specially kept in view, to visit schools where climatic and road conditions are similar to conditions with us, and to see schools which have been in existence a sufficient length of time for the people to judge fairly of their real value and efficiency. With letters of introduction from the Department of Education, we first called upon Mr. T. J. Johnston of Lansing, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Michigan. We wish to express our deep appreciation of the kind courtesy shown, and valuable help given by Mr. Johnston and his assistant, Mr. D. L. Coffey. Our thanks are also due to the County Superintendents, Messrs. R. C. Hoteware and J. C. Reigle of Michigan, and O. B. Greist of Indiana, and the Principals of the schools visited, who did all in their power to make our visit pleasant and profitable.

### 1. The Consolidated Schools in Michigan.

The consolidated schools visited in Michigan were two in Wexford County, Northern Michigan, and one in the southern part of Genesee County. Two were in villages of 150 to 250 people and one was in the open country. Wexford County is about as far north as Bracebridge, Muskoka, and the village of Haliburton under the forty-fifth parallel. We might expect the same climatic conditions in Wexford as we have in Muskoka and Haliburton.

(*a*) *The Buckley Consolidated School.*

The Buckley school serves an area of thirty-six square miles, and is located in a village of about 250 people, in Hanover Township, Wexford County, Northern Michigan. It is a beautiful brick building, situated in a grove of three acres, with an adjoining lot of ten acres which is used for playgrounds and experimental work in Agriculture. The school has a staff of seven teachers, and contains ten rooms, including those for agriculture, manual training, and household science. It does both public and high school work. The country in this part of the State is hilly, and the soil of a light sandy character. The main roads are gravel, and the side lines ordinary clay roads. The weather in winter is usually cold, with a great deal of snow and considerable drifting. The enrolment this last year was 177, and the average attendance 92%.

The transportation is effected in summer by the use of covered waggon-vans, one auto-truck, and Ford cars with homemade tops. In winter covered sleighs, heated with foot-warmers, are used. The length of the van-routes is from two to six and one-half miles. One of the drivers is a senior boy in the high school, and the others are farmers. The van-drivers own their outfit, and are paid from $75 to $100 per month.

Agriculture, manual training, and household science are taught in the seventh and eighth grades in the public school and during the four years of the high school course. In agriculture, this last year, special work was done in prun-

ing and spraying three orchards in the community, in experimental work with fertilizers on the plots, and in growing select corn and potatoes, which are the chief products of the country. The pupils are also taught the use of the Babcock tester, and the judging of horses, cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry.

(*b*) *The Hoxeyville Consolidated School.*

The Hoxeyville consolidated school is in the southwestern part of Wexford County, and serves an area of forty-eight square miles. The soil and general appearance of the country are similar to those at Buckley. The building is situated in the open country, and is built of red brick, finished in white stucco. There is a site of fifteen acres, of which ten acres was given as a free grant by a land company. The school contains seven beautiful rooms, well lighted and ventilated, with modern heating, flush water toilets, and shower baths. The enrolment is seventy-five, with an average attendance of ninety per cent. Agriculture, manual training, and household science are taught. Through the generosity of the parents, who bought the uniforms and instruments, a splendid band and orchestra has been organized among the senior pupils, which has added much to the enjoyment of community gatherings.

The pupils are transported in summer in four Ford cars and one covered waggon-van, and in winter in four sleighs with covered tops. The driver furnishes the conveyance, and the district the top. The length of routes is from four and one-half to six-miles; and the cost per day is $3.00 for the shortest route, $4.00 for the longest car route, and $5.00 for a waggon route.

All the pupils but one at this school are transported, and the longest time the children are on the road is one hour. For two years the drivers have never missed a trip.

(*c*) *The Goodrich Consolidated School.*

Another school visited was Goodrich, in Genesee County in Southern Michigan. The district includes an area of twenty-five square miles, and negotiations are about complete to bring in the entire township, which addition will make the area thirty-six square miles.

The soil is sandy loam, of excellent quality, and the surface is slightly rolling. The climatic, road, and other conditions are very similar to those in most parts of our own Province. The Goodrich school, located in a village of about two hundred inhabitants, is similar in structure and equipment to the schools of Buckley and Hoxeyville.

The building was erected in 1913 at a cost of $25,000, and has five classrooms, with separate rooms in the basement for manual training, household science, and agriculture. The site includes seven acres. There are six teachers, and the enrolment of pupils is 136, of whom 80 are transported. The main roads are excellent, and the others ordinary country roads.

For the transportation of the pupils, both waggon-vans and motors are used. Some of the tops of the motor cars were made by the boys in the manual training department. The shortest route is one mile, and the longest six miles; and the time on the road in the bus or van ranges from twenty to fifty minutes.

2. The Consolidated Schools of Indiana.

Randolph county is situated in the east central part of Indiana, and has an area of about 460 square miles. The country is slightly rolling, and the soil a rich clay loam. The climate is more moderate than in any part of Ontario, though the temperature sometimes goes as low as twenty degrees below zero.

The roads are excellent, though they have not always been so. Schools and roads have been improving at the same time. It is a purely agricultural county, having only two large towns and a number of small villages.

In the county there were originally 131 one-roomed schools, situated at the crossroads and about two miles apart. The first consolidated school was built in 1901, and now there are twenty-six, with only six one-roomed schools remaining in the whole county.

It should be noted, however, that this county is more densely populated than any county of a similar size in our own Province. In this county, four consolidated schools were visited, two located in villages and two in the open country.

These buildings were nothing short of a revelation, in appearance, surroundings, and equipment. They compare favourably in every way with most city schools. While no two are alike in architecture, they are all beautiful brick structures, ranging in size from twelve to sixteen rooms, and having nine to twelve teachers. The sites consist of three to six acres of land.

*The McKinley Consolidated School.*

The McKinley School may be taken as a type of the consolidated schools of Randolph County. It is situated in the open country, and the school district includes an area of thirty-six square miles. The building was erected in 1911 at a cost of $30,000. It has a site of six acres. There are twelve rooms, including gymnasium and assembly hall. It is properly lighted, and has an effective heating and ventilation system, flush water toilets, shower baths, and sanitary drinking fountains. There are nine whole-time and three part-time teachers. This school, in common with all others, is furnished with piano, phonograph, and orchestral and band instruments.

The enrolment is 321 pupils, with 48 in the high school department. The average attendance this last year was 97%. In 1920-21, 268 children were transported daily in five auto-buses owned by the school. Each of these makes two trips, and carries an average of thirty-six children on each trip. The cost is $3.00 for auto-bus, $2.50 for ordinary auto, and $1.50 for private rig per day. In addition, twenty-five children were transported in three ordinary autos and a private rig, all four of which were owned and operated by the drivers.

Common Features of These Schools.

(a) The courses of study in the consolidated schools of Michigan and of Indiana are very similar, and include the usual work of the Public School up to the eighth grade (equivalent to our Fourth Form), together with four years in high school training, including vocational work in agriculture, manual training, and household science under properly trained and qualified teachers. Each boy is required to give one-quarter of his time to agriculture, and each girl one-quarter of her time to household science, during the high school course.

(b) Another most interesting feature in all these schools is the hot lunch at noon. In the Goodrich school, lunch is served in cafeteria style by the girls of of household science classes. Groups of three or four girls take turns in the planning and buying of the hot lunch for each week, and a daily record is kept of the cost. They must submit their entire plan to the teacher in charge on Wednesday of the week to which they are assigned. All materials are purchased only by a written order from the teacher in charge, and all bills are paid by cheque drawn on the Hot Lunch Club account. A cashier collects from each pupil the cost of

the lunch for each day, which amounts must be deposited in the bank to the credit of the club. Squads of three or four are assigned to daily "clean-up" duty, and boys and girls share in this alike. At this school during last winter hot lunches were served for less than four cents per child per day, and at the Buckley school the cost was a little under six cents. Aside from the great benefit of a hot lunch to every pupil, there is in all this a valuable training in bookkeeping and banking methods, and in preparing wholesome, nourishing food in a practical and proper way under trained guidance.

(c) In some of these schools, there is also a furnished bed for any child who may be taken sick; and in every school a telephone is installed, connecting the home with the school, and the inspector with all his teachers.

(d) All of these schools give the pupils the opportunity for high school education without having to leave home. They afford also the advantages of vocational training.

### Attitude of the People Towards Consolidation.

All the schools visited have been in active operation from two to thirteen years, and after careful enquiry among the school officials, ratepayers, parents, and children in all these districts as to their attitude towards consolidation, we found it to be the almost unanimous opinion that the consolidated school is the real solution of the difficulties of rural education.

Wexford County is a typical county of the northern part of the lower peninsula of Michigan. The opinion of all the people called upon was, that their consolidated schools are a decided success. The chairman of one Board in conversation said, "I live out about four miles, and at the time of consolidation, voted against it because I thought transportation impossible. Now I would not want anything else, and am enthusiastic for it." Everyone interviewed was as much in favour of consolidation as this man.

Genesee is a typical county of the lower peninsula of Michigan. At the Goodrich school, several of the parents whose children are transported were visited, and asked for their opinion of consolidation. Everyone interviewed was in favour of it, excepting one, who gave as her reason the fact that the van was too crowded.

Perhaps an impartial view of the ratepayers may be gathered from the answers to the following questionnaire prepared by a committee from another part of the State which was considering consolidation. This questionnaire was impartially distributed in the Goodrich consolidated district among forty-four representative families whose children were transported. Twenty-five patrons returned the papers properly filled out. The following are the questions and answers as supplied by the Principal of the school:

1. Are you satisfied with the change from a district to a consolidated school? 24 answered "Yes."
2. Do you consider that your children are better taught? 24 answered "Yes."
3. Would you want the old rural school re-established? 24 answered "No."
4. Is transportation successful? 22 answered "Yes." One answered "No, too expensive"; another said, "No, van too crowded"; and another, "No, poor roads. Possibly it can be made satisfactory, but it is expensive."

Regarding the attitude of the parents towards consolidation the Principal of the school said, "Everybody seems entirely satisfied."

Further, a fair idea of what the ratepayers think may be gathered from another questionnaire recently sent by the Inspector of Randolph County to 567

of the ratepayers of the consolidated schools in that county. The following is a summary of the questions and the answers received:

1. How far do your children ride on the school bus? From 1 to 6 miles. Average 3.7 miles.
2. How long are they usually on the road to school? In horse-vans about 50 minutes. In auto-buses about 20 minutes.
3. Are the children absent from school as much as under the one-roomed school system? 70 answered "Yes; 432 answered "No"; 24 answered "Don't know."
4. Has the consolidated school affected land values in your community? 303 answered "Yes, increased"; 23 answered "No, decreased"; 25 answered, "Don't know."
5. Are the increased school advantages worth the increased cost? 404 answered "Yes"; 96 answered "No"; 12 answered "Don't know."
6. Would you change back to the old way? 458 answered "No"; 59 answered "Yes"; 6 answered "Don't know."

Under the laws of Indiana, when the average attendance is under twelve, the school is automatically closed. It may be closed by the township trustees when the average attendance is between twelve and fifteen; but when above fifteen, it can be closed only by petition of the ratepayers of the district. Ninety-one of the 125 closed schools in the county have been closed by petition of the ratepayers. It is worth noting, that schools which have been closed by petition may again be re-opened by petition; but, since consolidation has been adopted in Randolph county, only two districts schools have ever requested to return to the old system, and after one year's experience both asked to be taken back into the consolidation. All this seems conclusive proof that the people are satisfied with consolidation and have no desire to return to the old system.

### Attitude of the Pupils Toward Consolidation.

Through the courtesy of the Principal of Buckley school, a conference was held with twelve boys of the eighth grade (equivalent to our Entrance class) all of whom were transported except one. Closely questioned as to what they themselves and their parents thought of consolidation, everyone expressed the same favourable opinion, and not one wished to go back to the district school. One boy, who lives in the adjoining county and outside the consolidation, and who walks two and one-half miles to meet the van, and whose parents pay $60.00 per year for his tuition, when asked, "Why do you want to come to the consolidated school?, said, "Because I get a better education."

At the Goodrich school a similar conference, arranged through the kindness of the Principal, was held with about a dozen boys and girls of the high school grades, and the unanimous opinion of these pupils was in favour of consolidation.

### The Cost of Consolidation.

Is consolidation more expensive? This depends on the way it is looked at. If the community is satisfied to have in the consolidated school a similar education to what was given in the one-roomed rural school, then it will cost about the same, and perhaps even less; but if the community wishes a better and more complete education, then it is going to cost more. The two things that add to the cost are high school education, and transportation. But when the greater benefits that come to so many children under consolidation are considered, the com-

munity on the whole is paying less for the privileges than under the old system. While the cost is a little higher than in the district school, the people look upon it as a real investment, and seem to be satisfied that they are getting good value for their money.

### Transportation.

Is transportation feasible and practicable? Transportation, is without doubt one of the difficult problems of consolidation. However, in all the schools visited, transportation has passed the experimental stage; and, under the varying conditions of climate and roads, has been successfully carried out. In Randolph and Genesee counties, the roads are excellent, and this helps to simplify and solve the difficulty. But their roads were not always in their present fine condition. Roads and schools improved together. The one helped the other.

The conveyances in use are auto-buses, Ford motors with homemade tops, ordinary motors and waggon-vans for summer, and covered sleighs heated with foot-warmers for winter. In some cases the conveyances are owned by the drivers, and in others by the school. There seems to be no settled policy as to private or public ownership of conveyances, but the general opinion inclines to ownership by the school.

The drivers usually are farmers, and occupy the time between nine and four o'clock by working at home. They are carefully chosen, are men of good character, and are engaged under bond, and held responsible for the children going to and from school. Every van-driver makes a daily report to the Principal of the details of every trip and the deportment of the children. The following is a specimen form of a driver's daily report to the Principal of a consolidated school:—

Route No. .....Week ending .....19

*Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri.*

1. Time of first stop in morning.
2. Time of arrival at school building
3. Time of departure from school building.
4. Time of last stop in evening.
5. Number of times driver had to wait for children.
6. Number of times children were disorderly.
7. Number of foot-warmers used.
8. Names of pupils late to meet van.
9. Character of complaints by parents and pupils.
10. Suggestions by parents or pupils.
11. Was van flagged across railway tracks?

Signed .....DRIVER.

Except after a severe storm in winter, or when the roads are in bad condition in spring, little or no difficulty or hardship is experienced by children having to wait at the road or corners, as the vans run on schedule time. In Northern Michigan, where the conditions of roads and weather are similar to what is to be found in the greater part of our own Province, and at the Buckley and Hoxey-

ville schools, no difficulty has so far been found in keeping the roads open in winter. The ratepayers interviewed said, "The vans going over them twice a day help to keep them open. The Township authorities help, and since consolidation the people travel more."

The Superintendent for Wexford County, Michigan, said regarding the school at Buckley, "All transportation difficulties and fears in the minds of the people vanished within six months after the school was opened."

### The Financing of Consolidated Schools.

No grants are given by the State in either Michigan or Indiana for the erection of consolidated school buildings. The entire cost is borne directly by the people themselves. In Michigan, the State gives a grant towards transportation of $400.00 for every conveyance and $1,000.00 to every consolidated school where agriculture is taught. The Federal Government gives another grant of from $800.00 to $1,000.00 for agriculture. In Indiana, no grants of any kind are given for consolidated schools. The State contributes to all school corporations the interest on the permanent school fund, which amounts to a little over $4.00 per child each year. Outside of that money, all funds for school purposes are raised from the township in which the school is located.

### Salaries of Teachers

The salaries of Principals in consolidated schools doing the work up to the twelfth grade (i.e., four years of high school) range from $1,800 to $2,500. Assistants with special qualifications in vocational work receive from $1,000 to $1,350, and for primary and ordinary work from $950 to $1,250. Consolidation has been advancing so rapidly that there is some difficulty in securing the right type of trained and qualified teachers, especially for the principalships of schools. Some of the Superintendents (Inspectors) say that there is not now so much difficulty in securing boarding-houses for teachers as under the old system, for since consolidation many of the best homes of the community are open to them. In a few cases, teachers' residences have been erected, and in one case the old school building has been turned into a teachers' residence.

### Administration.

In Michigan in a consolidated school district the number of trustees is five, elected by the ratepayers by ballot for a term of three years. Their powers are to engage teachers and school officials, and to look after the property and general school affairs. In Indiana the township is the unit, and there is but one trustee elected for each township. They are elected by ballot, and the term of office is four years. Their duties are to engage teachers and school officials, and to look after property and school business in general. They levy taxes upon the recommendation of an advisory board of three members. Appeals may be taken from the township trustees to the county superintendent, whose decision is final.

### Playground Opportunities.

In nearly all these schools, there is a gymnasium, usually in the basement where indoor games are played during the winter and wet weather. Outside, there are ample playgrounds for both boys and girls, where baseball, volley-ball, basket-ball, and other out-door games are played. For the smaller children there are swings, teeters, and other contrivances. At some schools there are group

games with one of the teachers in charge. It was an interesting and inspiring sight to see scores of boys and girls full of life and energy, playing in their different games at recess and noon.

### High School Education.

In all these schools, the higher work of the ninth to the twelfth grades (similar to our continuation school work) is carried on. While not much definite information could be gathered as to the number going on from the eighth grade to the higher grades, some of the Principals put it as high as 95 and 100%.

Superintendent Greist of Randolph says, "Prior to consolidation comparatively few eighth grade graduates entered high school. A thorough investigation of each of the townships shows that, for five years previous to consolidation, the number of eighth grade graduates to enter high school was as low as 21% in one township to as high as 50% in another, the average for the county being less than 40%. Since consolidation the entire county has averaged more than 93%.

As to the effect of consolidation on the drift city-wards, no definite information could be secured. For several years industrial expansion and higher wages attracted great numbers of young people from the country to the city. Now, on account of business depression throughout the country, and the better educational and social opportunities in rural communities, the trend of rural people to the city is almost stopped. The superintendents and principals are of opinion that the work, spirit, and atmosphere of the consolidated school helps to make the people more contented and satisfied with rural life.

From this personal survey of these consolidated schools in Michigan and Indiana, most of which have been in operation for several years and are now past the experimental stage, certain facts are impressed upon one:

1. Each of these schools is a real rural school for rural people. With the exception of one, all seven consolidated schools visited are situated either in small villages or in the open country. As the interests of the people are agricultural, the whole atmosphere of the school is rural and thus it brings into their lives a satisfaction and fulness that could not be secured under old conditions.

2. Consolidation provides a school in which the needs of country life are served, and in which the boys and girls are receiving a high school education without having to leave home.

3. The consolidated school has become a real community centre for all the people. The school building, with its assembly hall, is the central place at which all, both young and old, meet and mingle with one another for the discussion of problems affecting the welfare and interests of the entire community; where concerts and entertainments are given; where club-meetings and all forms of social gatherings are held. The school thus becomes a mighty factor in giving the people a broader outlook, in breaking down all narrow and selfish views, and in making country life attractive and satisfying.

Respectfully submitted,

P. J. McLaren.

J. R. Bell.

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